



2005 Farm Bill Programs Activity in the Rio Grande River Watershed

The Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP) is a voluntary program that helps farmers and ranchers keep their land in agriculture. It provides matching funds to state, Tribal, or local governments and non-governmental organizations with existing farmland protection programs to purchase conservation easements or other interests in land.

FY 2005 FRPP Activities				
County	Type	# of Contracts	Acres	Federal Share
Saguache	Ranch	8	4,606	\$1,734,520
Total		8	4,606	\$1,734,520



The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) was reauthorized in the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Farm Bill) to provide a voluntary conservation program for farmers and ranchers that promotes agricultural production and environmental quality. It provides financial and technical help to assist eligible participants install or implement structural and management conservation practices on eligible agricultural land.

FY 2005 EQIP Contract Funding in the Rio Grande River Watershed			
Natural Resource Concerns	Applications Received	Applications Contracted	\$ Amount Approved
Water Quality	103	39	\$1,026,084
Acequias	53	22	\$75,207
Soil Erosion	2	2	\$7,329
Grassland	52	34	\$255,565
Riparian	9	7	\$189,205
Waste Management	27	19	\$183,774
Forestland	0	0	\$0
Ground and Surface Water	60	29	\$614,354
Total	306	152	\$2,351,518

The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), a voluntary program, offers landowners technical and financial support to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands on their property.

FY 2005 WRP Activities	
Number of Applications Received	5
Number of Applications Contracted	1
Dollar Amount Approved	\$431,599
Acres Under Contract	261
Statewide, another ten applications totaling \$4,483,489 are on the waiting list to fund 3,141 acres of easements.	

The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) is a voluntary program that encourages creation of high quality wildlife habitats that support wildlife populations of national, state, Tribal, and local significance. Through WHIP, NRCS provides technical and financial assistance to landowners and others to develop upland, wetland, riparian, and aquatic habitat areas on their property.

FY 2005 WHIP Activities	
Number of Applications Received	11
Number of Applications Contracted	10
Dollar Amount Approved	\$157,500
Acres Under Contract	207.7

The Grassland Reserve Program (GRP), a voluntary program, helps landowners restore and protect grasslands, while maintaining the areas as grazing lands. It emphasizes support for grazing operations, plant and animal biodiversity, and grassland under the greatest threat of conversion.

FY 2005 GRP Statewide Activity	
Applications Received	206
Applications Contracted	6
Dollars Approved	\$2,588,372
Acres Under Contract	13,679

Rio Grande River Watershed



Photos by NRCS Colorado Staff

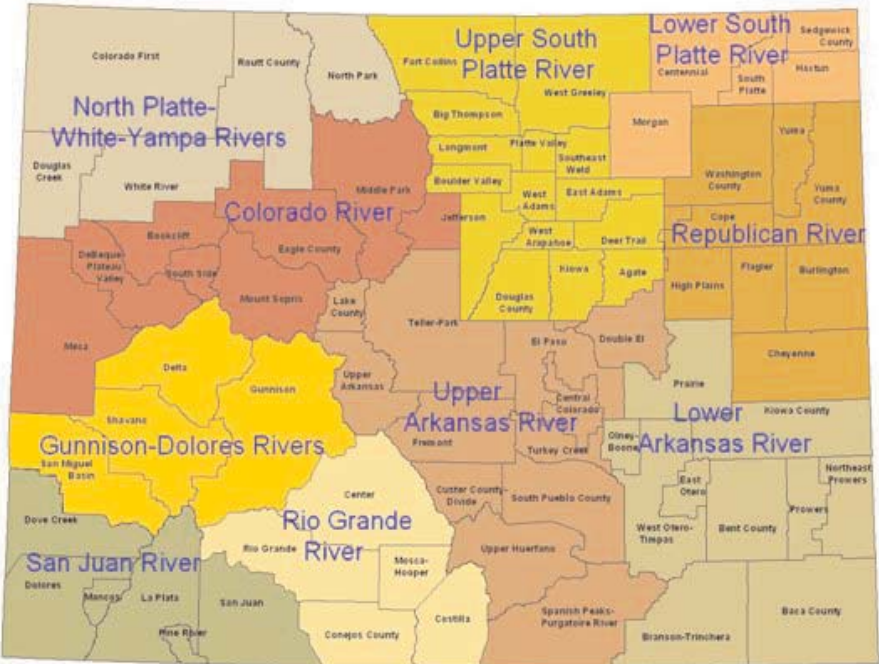


Watershed Profile

The Rio Grande River Watershed totals 4,794,870 acres and includes all and/or portions of Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Hinsdale, Mineral, Rio Grande, and Saguache Counties. NRCS natural resource specialists are staffed at the Alamosa, Center, La Jara, Monte Vista, and San Luis USDA Field Service Centers to provide technical assistance, as well as incentive and cost-share program information to watershed residents.

NRCS Colorado looks to each watershed to identify its particular local resource needs and priorities. The Colorado Association of Conservation Districts (CACD) provides leadership in this effort to foster increased decision making at the local level. In the Rio Grande River Watershed, five Conservation Districts organized a locally led watershed work group which identified its major resource concerns as water quantity and quality, noxious weed management, rangeland management, and soil conservation. Ultimately, the work group will set goals, identify programs and other sources to address its natural resource concerns, develop proposals and recommendations, implement solutions, and measure success.

Colorado Watershed Associations and Conservation Districts



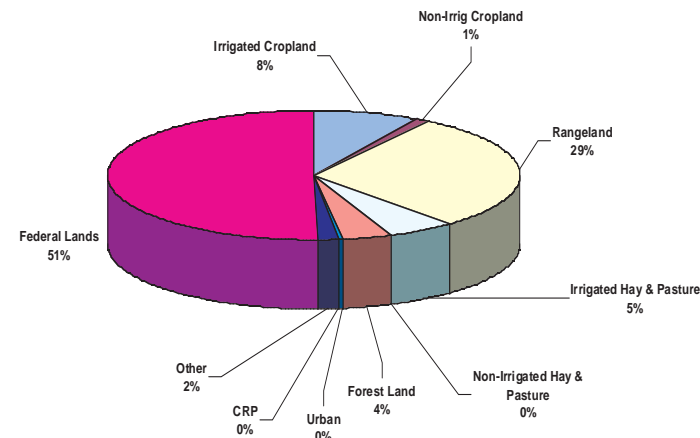
High Priority Resource Concerns

as identified by a locally-led Watershed Work Group

Water Quality Water Quantity Rangeland Management Noxious Weeds Soil Conservation

Land Use

Rio Grande Watershed
Land Use 2004



Note: Acres are a compilation of data from the USDA-NASS Census of Agriculture; USDA-NRCS Natural Resources Inventory; USDI-USGS National Land Cover Dataset; State of Colorado-DNR Colorado Decision Support Systems.

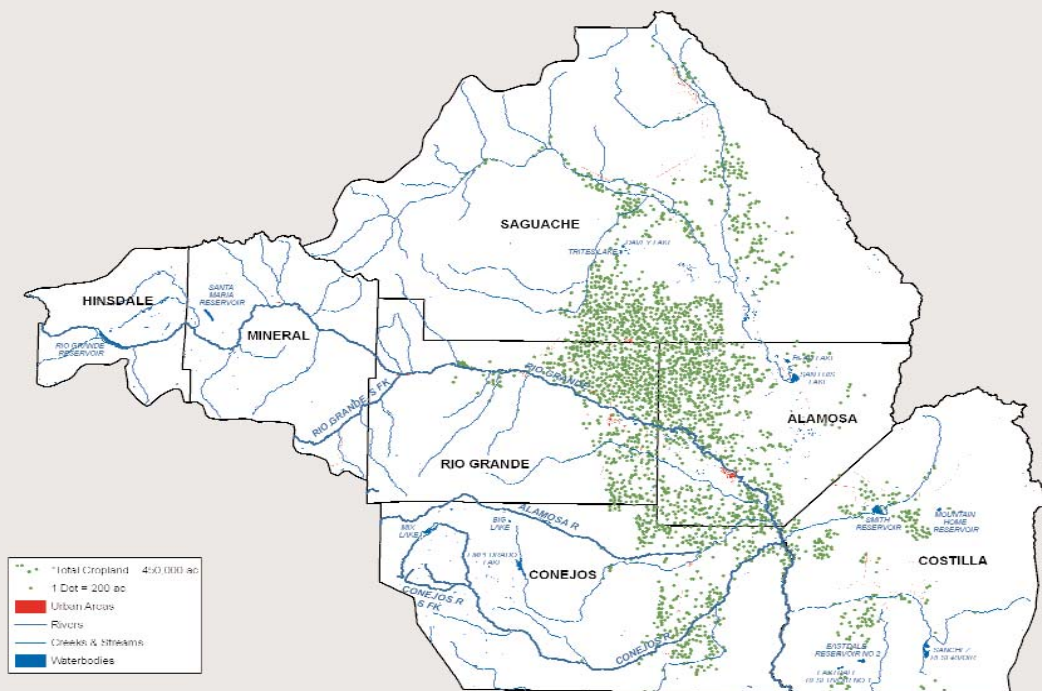


4,794,870 Acres

Acres

Irrigated Cropland	.400,000
Non-Irrigated Cropland	.50,000
Rangeland	.1,400,000
Irrigated Hay & Pasture	.248,936
Non-Irrigated Hay & Pasture	.10,000
Forestland	.180,000
Urban	.8,800
CRP	.1
Federal Lands	.2,412,13
Other	.85,000

Rio Grande River Watershed - Cropland



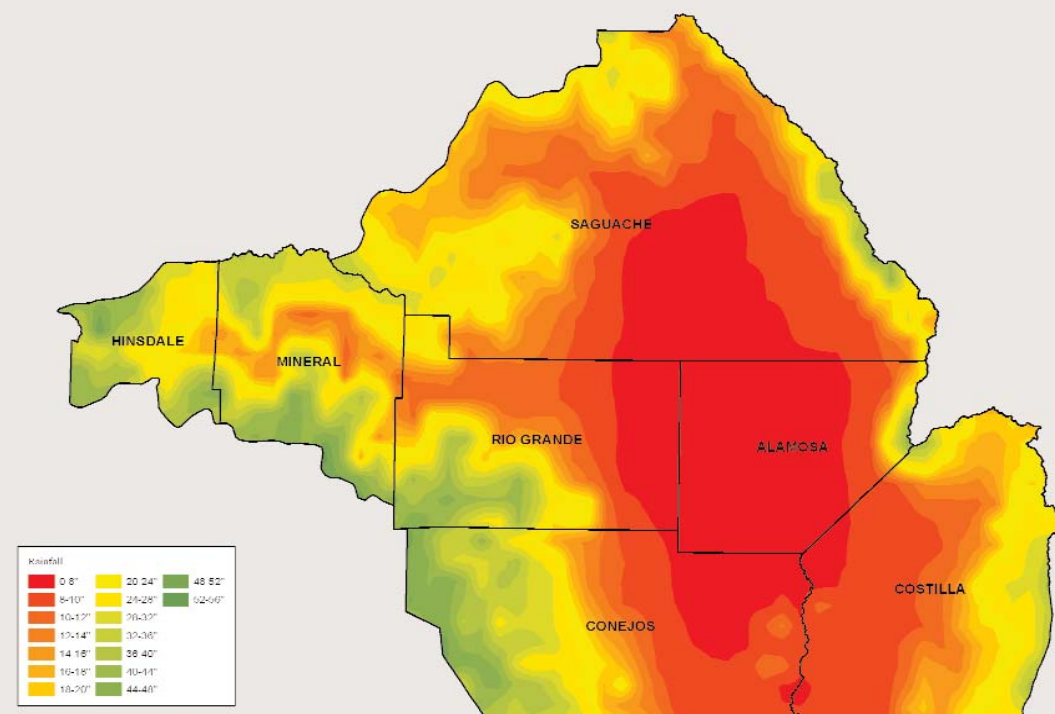
NRCS National Resources Conservation Service

Rio Grande River Watershed - Rangeland



NRCS National Resources Conservation Service

Rio Grande River Watershed - Average Annual Rainfall



NRCS National Resources Conservation Service